

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 02590 020245Z

63

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 AID-05 EB-07 OMB-01 COME-00 TRSE-00

/082 W

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R 020200Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7244

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 2590

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EAID EFIN EINV FR VN LA

SUBJECT: FRENCH ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM AND LAOS

REF: VIENTIANE 2544

1. FRENCH EMBASSY COUNSELOR LAMBERT TOLD EMBOFF NOV. 1 THAT FRENCH WOULD BE SENDING A DELEGATION TO HANOI SHORTLY TO DISCUSS AID AND INVESTMENT IN FOLLOW UP TO VISIT BY FORMER FOREIGN MINISTRY SECRETARY GENERAL DE COURCEL TO HANOI LATE 1975. LAMBERT SAID SRV HAD NOT FULFILLED COMMITMENTS IT HAD MADE TO FRENCH DURING THAT VISIT, AND FRENCH COMPANIES HAD COMPLAINED ABOUT LACK OF VIETNAMESE COOPERATION, PARTICULARLY REGARDING WIDE RANGE OF FRENCH INVESTMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

2. NEWHILE, LAMBET SAID, LPDR WEEK OF OCTOBER 24 HAD REPAID \$400,000 INSTALLMENT ON DEBT OWED FRENCH FOR INVESTMENT IN BRASSERIES ET GLACIERES DU LAOS (BGL) BEER AND SOFT DRINK FACTORY. (FRENCH COMMERICAL ATTACHE  
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PAGE 02 VIENTI 02590 020245Z

ROUZO TOLD EMBOFF OCTOBER 29 THAT \$400,000 WAS ONLY

ABOUT A TENTH OF DEBT LAO OWED FRENCH GOVERNMENT INSURANCE AGENCY COFAS FOR PRIVATE FRENCH INVESTMENT IN BGL, NOT A HALF AS REPORTED PARA 8 REFTTEL.) LAMBERT SAID LAO HAD FINALLY MADE GOOD ON COMMITMENT THEY HAD UNDERTAKEN IN JULY TO BEGIN REPAYMENT OF BGL DEBT SINCE THEY WANTED BREWERY TO BEGIN OPERATING AGAIN, BUT IT WOULD STILL TAKE ABOUT SIX MONTHS BEFORE TECHNICAL PROBLEMS COULD BE WORKED OUT FOR PRODUCTION TO RESUME. (LAO REMAIN OPTIMISTIC, HOWEVER, WITH "NEW VIENTIANE" NEWSPAPER WHICH APPEARED OCTOBER 30 REPORTING THAT BEER SALES WOULD BEGIN NOVEMBER 30.)

3. LAMBERT ALSO SAID THAT LPDR IN LAST FEW DAYS HAD RELEASED LAO EMPLOYEE OF FRENCH COMPANY WHICH OPERATED TIM MINE IN LAOS, WHO HAD BEEN ARRESTED OCTOBER 1 WHEN LAO SEIZED RADIO USED BY COMPANY IN VIENTIANE TO COMMUNICATE WITH MINE NEAR THAKHEK IN SOUTHERN LAOS.

4. FINALLY, MAURICE CAVALERIE, FRENCH CITIZEN WHO RAN CONSTELLATION HOTEL IN VIENTIANE AS HAVEN FOR NEWSMEN FOR SEVERAL DECADES, CAME TO US EMBASSY NOVEMBER 1 TO INQUIRE ABOUT VISA. CAVALERIE TOLD EMBOFF THAT LPDR HAD RECENTLY AKEN OVER HIS HOTEL WITH PROMISE TO REIMBURSE HIM BUT HAD NOT YET MADE HIM OFFER WHICH HE COULD NOT REFUSE.  
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## Message Attributes

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